

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

077-0180-0006

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Propertyhistoric name Anthony United States Post Officeother names/site number Same**2. Location**street & number 121 West Steadman☐ not for publicationcity, town Anthony☐ vicinitystate Kansas

code

KScounty Harper

code

077zip code 67003**3. Classification**

Ownership of Property

☐ private☐ public-local☐ public-State☒ public-Federal

Category of Property

☒ building(s)☐ district☐ site☐ structure☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

Noncontributing

 buildings sites structures objects1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Kansas Post Offices that contain TreasuryDepartment Section Artwork, 1936-1942Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Ramon Bowen State Historic Preservation OfficerDecember 6, 1988

Signature of certifying official

Date

Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined eligible for the NationalRegister. ☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined not eligible for the

National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government: Post Office

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Government: Post Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

20th Century Revival: Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Other: Tar

other Concrete

Stone: limestone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Anthony United States Post Office (c. 1937-1938) is located at 121 West Steadman in Anthony, Harper County, Kansas (pop. 2,661). The one-story, flat roofed, red brick building has a southern facade orientation. The building measures approximately sixty feet from east to west and fifty-four feet from north to south, with a twenty-one foot rear projection. The building's center, double door entrance is delineated by a classical surround with fluted pilasters and a dentilled entablature. Steps lead up to the doorway. Two pairs of large windows surmounted by flat limestone lintels and underscored by recessed brick panels flank the doorway. Five windows with similar treatment pierce the east and west elevations of the building. This post office is an example of a smaller class C or D standardized design type that was repeated throughout the country during the 1930s.

The mural "Turning a Corner" was installed on the west wall of the Anthony Post Office lobby above the postmaster's door and the two bulletin boards which flank it. This is the traditional location for Section artwork in the smaller class C and D post offices. "Turning a Corner" is an oil on canvas mural that depicts three farmers on a combine threshing wheat. A freight train skirts the edge of a large wheat field, billowing smoke into the cloudy horizon as the farmers continue their work. Jones used muted colors in this agricultural scene to depict the dried field, the dirty and sweaty blue jeans and tan and olive work clothes, the cloudy grey sky, the train, and the farm machinery. The mural measured fourteen feet by five foot three inches before installation and has no frame.

The mural was installed on September 15, 1939. It was not varnished. The treatment recommended by the artist for cleaning called for wallpaper cleaner or a weak solution of soap and water to be used. In August, 1973 the mural's condition was assessed as good, it remains as such and according to current information has not been restored.

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A varnished, wooden vestibule projects into the lobby, cutting off some view of the mural. This is a traditional design feature found in most of the post offices included in this nomination. The floors and wainscoting retain their original tiles. The postmaster's door and bulletin boards retain their varnished wood surrounds. The original hanging light fixtures have been replaced with almost flush mounted fluorescent lights. Changes have occurred to the window and mail box wall on the north.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Arts

Politics/Government

Social History

Period of Significance

1939

1939

1939

Significant Dates

1939

1939

1939

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Jones, Joe: Artist

Simon, Louis: Supervising Architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Anthony United States Post Office (c. 1937-1938) is being nominated to the National Register as part of the Kansas Post Office Artwork (1936-1942) Thematic Resources nomination at the local and state levels of significance under criteria A and C for its historical association with the Treasury Department's Section program and for the artistic significance of the mural that it contains. The mural, "Turning a Corner", was painted by St. Louis artist Joe Jones (1901-1963) in 1939.

"Turning a Corner" is an oil on canvas mural that depicts three farmers on a combine threshing wheat. A freight train skirts the edge of the large wheat field, billowing smoke into the cloudy horizon as the farmers diligently continue their work. Jones takes a scene which is rooted in the local economy of south central Kansas and elevates it to represent broad aspects of the American democratic tradition, the value of hard work and the integrity of American society. The farmers become slightly larger than life, representing all farmers and the dignity there in. "Turning a Corner" is representative of the regional social realism that was encouraged under the Section program.

Jones is regarded as an influential social realist painter, in 1935 he was classified among America's most gifted painters of social protest. However, his radical philosophies are not apparent in the Anthony mural, nor in the four other Section commissions that he received between 1938 and 1941. All of these murals show typical agricultural scenes of wheat or corn harvesting, projecting the image of hard working, efficient, self-sufficient farmers into slightly larger than life figures that represent all farmers. These murals were part of a much larger series of threshing and harvesting paintings produced by Jones between 1935 and 1941.

☒ See continuation sheet

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Although Jones was active within the Section program, he also appears to have been an outspoken critic. In 1939 Jones wrote Section leader Edward Bruce that "architecturally the (winning mural) will fit into any thousand of buildings I know - simply because it fits none without mediocrity . . ." He questioned the feasibility of placing murals in small post office lobbies and called his Anthony work a "big easel painting", not a mural.

The extent of community involvement in the development of subject material and presentation of the mural is not clear in the Anthony case, nor is it clear whether Jones received this commission as a result of a competition held explicitly for the Anthony United States Post Office or whether the award was made on the basis of previous submissions. Jones worked quickly on the Anthony mural, receiving the contract on July 1, 1939 and installing the mural on September 15, 1939. "Turning a Corner" was installed on the west wall of the Anthony United States Post Office lobby above the postmaster's door and the two bulletin boards that flank it. It measured 14' x 5'3" before installation. Jones received \$730 for the commission. The Anthony United States Post Office is an example of one of the many smaller class C or D type post offices that received Section artwork in Kansas.

Please see the Kansas Post Office Artwork (1936-1942) Thematic Resources cover nomination for additional information.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Falk, Peter Hastings. Who Was Who In American Art. (Madison, Ct: Soundview Press, 1985).

General Services Administration. Treasury Department's Section Records- Anthony, Kansas.

Kansas State Historical Society. Newspaper Clipping - Anthony, Kansas, 1938.

National Archives. Public Building Services (RG 121), Correspondence with Artists (Series 126) - Anthony, Kansas.

Park, Marlene and Gerald E. Markowitz. Democratic Vistas. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984).

☒ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office *
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository:

Kansas State Historical Society*

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than 1 acre.

UTM References

A 14 587120 4112200
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is located on Lots 13 & 14 and S. 47' of Lot 15 in Block 21, Anthony, Kansas. The property is bounded to the north by Lots 16, 17 and 18 and N 3' of Lot 15, to the west by N. Bluff Street, to the east by an alley, and to the south by West Steadman.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire parcel that is historically associated with the property.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha Hagedorn-Krass, Architectural Historian

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date February 11, 1988

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Svedlow, Dr. Anthony V. (Mulvane Gallery, Washburn University, Topeka,
Kansas). Personal interview with Martha Hagedorn-Krass,
January 8, 1988.

